Sweet Sanatorium

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Sweet Sanatorium

by orphan_account

Summary

Will breathed the smallest sigh of relief, hoping the doctor had not heard, and rounded the desk to settle at his feet.

In the 1930's, an 18 year old Will Graham is admitted to an Asylum. The Head Doctor takes a less-than-professional interest in the young patient.

Vegan in Furs

Chapter Notes

> Please read the tags before going any further, and I also want to mention that this fic contains period-typical use of the word 'retard' and other offensive language. This does not represent my own views, nor does the way in which the patients are portrayed in this fic. I personally believe that patient's difficulties had a lot to do with the conditions of mental institutions during the Great Depression and less to do with the actual illness/mania from which they suffered. It's also worth noting that although all sexual interactions between Will and Hannibal are consensual, Hannibal is much older and legally obligated to protect Will in this setting, and so any consent is at least mildly dubious.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Bayview Asylum sat stark against the late afternoon sky, ominous and imposing in the darkness of it's brick and squareness of its structure. The rows of barred windows boasted four stories, if the arched tower protruding from the centre were ignored. A cobblestone path cut through forty-six acres of uncultivated land, to a case of stone steps, and at the top sat a heavy double door, the various locking mechanisms too difficult to miss.

Will shuddered, noting that the entrance led straight to the second floor, the first slightly sunken into the ground so that the patients inside would only see the occasional pair of feet passing them by. He wondered what depravities a man had to commit to be kept there, and hoped his father had spoken truthfully when he'd claimed to have done the best he could in terms of accommodation.

The doors groaned as they opened and a stout nurse appeared, effecting only a vague sense of interest as grey eyes scanned Will's well dressed, if somewhat malnourished, body. She looked down her nose at his face last, expression softening at the youth and fear she found there.

“Come now, boy,” She ushered him over, swiftly releasing the man who had been charged with seeing Will safely institutionalised. “It won't do to delay the inevitable.”

Will didn't spare the man so much as a glance over his shoulder. He only knew him in passing, as one of his father's railroad workers and could easily come to the conclusion that he had been forced to deal with this unsavoury business if he'd wanted to keep his job.

He fought the urge to bite his lip, a habit that would have resulted in the blow of a rolled newspaper across the back of his head had his father been beside him, and tried to hide his shaking beneath the broad shoulders of his topcoat.

“I'm nurse Selmon,” She spoke curtly, patting down greying-brown hair that was already twisted and tucked neatly away from her face and neck. “I'm the head-nurse here, so long as you do as I ask you'll be fine.”

She ushered him passed when he finally reached her and the door shut heavily behind him with a clang of finality. Will took in his surroundings with a sinking stomach. The lights were unusually dim, some flickering and others not working at all. The walls were a brown patterned paper, peeling at the corners and spotted with remnants of stains that had clearly not be possible to remove entirely. Nurse Selmon took in his anguished appraisal and tutted.

“Be thankful to have a roof over your head and food in your belly at a time like this, boy.”

He didn't answer, only ducked his head to avoid revealing any further his antipathy to the woman and hoped she took it for remorse.

It had been particularly difficult to close himself off the past few months which, he supposed, was how he had ended up in the secluded asylum in the first place. As it happened, he could easily tell that nurse Selmon disliked the building as much as he did, and that she would leave if there were work available for a woman anywhere else.

“This is the dayroom,” she announced, as she stopped under an arch that led to a rather crowded space.

The inmates inside it were a perfect example of the broad scale of insanity; some of the men merely seemed irritated and mildly anxious while others rocked in corners and muttered to their own twitching fingers. Will swallowed the bile that rose in his throat and hoped he'd be allowed to remain in his room if he behaved.

“No fighting, no spitting, no urinating or defecating anywhere other than the bathroom. You're mentally retarded, not animals.”

Will winced at the label, he hardly needed to be reminded when he could sense the distress of others flaking from the walls around him, like the paint from the crackled ceiling above.

“Don't resist your treatment, no yelling at the nurses or orderlies,” she continued in a monotonous voice, ticking off a mental checklist as she spoke, “and absolutely no *buggery*.” The last word was practically spat. “Thirty lashes of the cane for that one.” She added, almost proudly, as if to have your bare ass beaten blue with a wooden stick was some new-found cure to homosexuality.

Will tried his best to ignore the panicked squawking that had erupted from the dayroom at the mention of the cane as he followed the nurse further into the building. He was shown the dining room, empty for the moment other than rows of metal tables and chairs, all bolted to the floor. He had found eating difficult of late, nauseous as if in a state of constant, debilitating, inebriation.

The chapel was next, dusty and dim as if God himself had conceded and retracted his light from the place. Will looked only long enough to feign a brief moment of religious intent. In

truth he had never been a man of God. Not when that very same God would cast him into damnation for certain proclivities that he had fought but never been able to conquer.

“The bedrooms are on the next floor, you'll need to be cleaned up first.”

Will allowed himself to be led into a damp room of yellow tiles and mildew, despite the fact he had washed in his own bathroom that very morning.

“Clothes off.” Nurse Selmon, raised an eyebrow when she was not immediately obeyed.

Will tucked his arms up into his sleeves, another habit his father had attempted to beat out of him, and wished he could shrink away within the material entirely.

“Would you prefer a male orderly,” She sighed, seemingly exasperated by the show of fearful defiance.

“No.” It was the first word he had spoken since crossing the threshold to the damnable place and nurse Selmon seemed somewhat surprised. “No,thankyou,” He amended.

That would only be worse.

He stripped from his coat first, letting the expensive, tan material land in a heap at his feet when nurse Selmon didn't extend her arms to take it from him. Then he stepped from brown toe-capped Oxfords, socked toes curling against the cool, wet tiles. His hands struggled with the knot of his tie, fumbling nervously for a moment before that too landed on the floor. The shirt was next, and to Will's credit he only hesitated a moment before unbuttoning his tallpants and allowing them to slip from his waist.

He shivered in the cool air, feeling utterly demoralized.

“Underwear too, it's nothing I haven't seen before.”

Blinking back the sting of tears, Will revealed himself completely. His father had had him stand that way before, when he was younger. Naked and vulnerable to drunken criticism. *Too wiry*. An *embarrassment* and, if the man were feeling particularly spiteful, a *bastard* probably.

Selmon seemed unaware of his internal distress as she stepped around him to twist the stiff handle of one of the brass shower-heads jutting from the wall. Will stepped beneath the stream of lukewarm water, glad that the nurse busied herself with collecting his clothes so that he could have some privacy.

Not long after, her heels clacked against the grey ceramic floor as she led Will to, what she had called, his room. In actuality, the small space more closely resembled a cell and the sliding of an iron lock behind him hardly invalidated that observation.

He stood with his back to the door, dressed in pale blue, buttonless cotton, feeling the dread of past patients seep from the sparse furniture and nestle under his skin. The room was narrow and contained nothing more than a bed with a white, flaking, metal frame and a wooden rocking chair. Both pieces sported a matching set of leather restraints and the only

window was barred and set too high in the wall to properly look out of. The floor was chipped where the chair's rockers had hit the floor with too much force and the straps on the bed looked worn and well-used.

Will took a step closer and ran his fingers over the wrist restraint, yanking his hand back when he sensed the virile fear of the last man to be tied that way. He shuddered and stepped into the middle of the room, his head already throbbing and entirely unwilling to touch anything else if he could help it. Closing his eyes helped. If he tried hard enough he could imagine he was somewhere else, but he wasn't given the chance. Before he could drift away fully, another nurse was sliding the door gently open.

“William Graham?” She asked, in a voice so soft that it was almost a balm against the harshness of the rest of the asylum. She waited for Will to nod before continuing, “You're 18 and you'll being staying here long-term?”

Will swallowed the lump in his throat, feeling his chest restrict in panic. Long-term, *forever*. He nodded again and was rewarded with a small, pitying smile.

This nurse was younger, rich brunette hair falling in fashionable curls around the gentle features of her face. “I'm nurse Bloom, Doctor Lecter will see you now.”

~

The Doctor's office was so far removed from the squalor of the rest of the asylum, that it was difficult to believe it existed in the same building at all.

A large mahogany desk sat proudly in front of an arched window. A set of heavy, blue brocade curtains were drawn back so that the remaining light of the late afternoon illuminated the dust particles floating by. Will glanced quickly behind himself, to find the entire back wall lined with bookcases, matching the desk in colour and design. However the one item in the room that truly drew his eye was the cane that rested menacingly along the length of the desk.

Will's attention was only drawn to the Doctor when he cleared his throat and took a seat, not motioning for Will to do the same. He stood awkwardly, wrapping himself up in his own arms for comfort, as his gaze flickered from the man's nose to his chin, and back again. He was handsome, unusually beautiful even, but Will was careful not to show his interest. He hardly wanted to give them any other reasons to keep him locked away from polite society.

The Doctor wore a three breasted suit in burgundy cheviot, french cuffs of his dress shirt folded neatly over the sleeves. It was an unusual choice for a man in his position, who would more likely be seen in a long white coat and black slacks, but he wore it elegantly. Will would guess that the man was in his early to mid thirties.

“William Graham, I presume?” He spoke in a rich European accent that dripped like honey from his tongue.

“Will.” It was all he could manage in Dr Lecter's overbearing presence and he regretted it almost as soon as the word left his lips.

“I beg your pardon?” the doctor leaned forward in his chair, appraising the young man stood before him.

“I, um-,” Will bit his lips, correcting himself quickly, and wishing he hadn't spoken at all; “I prefer Will, sir.”

“Is that so?” The doctor hummed thoughtfully to himself, pulling a brown folder from the top drawer of his desk and opening it in a way that kept the contents shielded from Will's view.

His eyes scanned over the text there, silence filling the space between the two men until the weight of it had Will shuffling his feet within the oversized, slip-on shoes he'd been provided with. Maroon eyes peered over the edge of the file then, eyebrows marginally raised.

“Tell me, Will, is there something offensive about my choice of office furniture?”

Will felt his heart rate pick up, immediately aware that he had done something wrong but not entirely sure what it was. He looked from the desk to the bookcases behind him, at a loss for what he was suppose to say.

“The chairs, Will,” The doctor's smooth voice snapped his attention back and he followed his line of vision to the two shell-back leather chairs facing the desk. “What could be so dreadful about them, that you would rather stand?”

Will quickly took a step towards them, then stopped, unsure of whether or not he was being tested in the way his father had so often tested him.

“I- it would be impolite to sit without the offer being extended to do so,” He said, head ducked in case he was taken as insolent for speaking back, or indeed, speaking at all.

“Will,” The doctor spoke softly then, and when Will raised his head he was surprised to find that the man was offering him a small smile. “Please take a seat.” He motioned that Will could choose either and then went back to reading the file.

Will sat in the nearest seat, fighting the urge to tuck his legs up under him in an effort to take up as little space as possible. He folded his hands in his lap and took slow, steady breaths in an attempt to calm himself.

“You'll have to forgive me, Will.” The doctor spoke absently, still reading, “my other patients do not pay much attention to social convention. It seems I have forgotten my manners along the way.” He placed the folder back into the draw it had come from and closed it gently. “Thank you for reminding me.

“I assume the head nurse told you the rules?” He added, leaning back in his chair.

Will nodded and it was followed by another moment of silence.

“Do you know why you're here Will?”

He nodded again. In truth, his frequent episodes of sleepwalking and social difficulties were only part of the reason for his institutionalisation. His father had taken a new wife, much

younger than himself and far too well-raised and demure to protest against his treatment of his only child. She had quickly fallen pregnant and, so sure that he would eventually be given another son, his father had swiftly disowned Will, with hurried promises that this was for the best.

“What can you tell me about your sleepwalking?” Dr Lecter had pulled a pen from his ink well and opened a leather bound notepad to take notes.

Will shrugged, not wanting to talk about dreams in which he bludgeoned his father to death and mutilated his corpse thereafter.

“I believe you were told the rules regarding co-operating with your treatment Will?” It was said benignly, but the cane was proof of what awaited Will if he didn't at least offer some sugar-coated version of the inner workings of his mind.

“I have nightmares,” he offered, peeling his eyes away from the cane to Hannibal's chin. “And then, when I wake up, i'm not in my bed.”

The doctor jotted something down and motioned for Will to continue with a roll of his wrist.

“It started after my mother passed away,” Here most people would offer a hollow condolence. Will was grateful that Hannibal did not.

“And do you dream of your mother?”

“No.”

“No? Then what?”

“It's always different, Sir.” It was only a half-lie, his dreams always involved the murder of his father, but his subconscious was creative in the methods it applied to the task.

“No running theme at all?” It was as if the man knew the right places to pick away at, until the truth would spill out from the cracks his fingernails left behind.

“No, sir.”

There was only a hum in response, and Will knew the doctor was not entirely convinced. “And how old were you when your mother passed?”

“Six, sir.”

“And when your father remarried?”

“Only recently sir, this past Spring.”

“Do you know why he waited so long?”

“I don't know sir, perhaps because he had a retarded son.”

Hannibal placed his pen back into the well, gazing thoughtfully at his new patient.

“So you accept the label society has given you?”

“Does it matter?” Will asked quietly, wishing the doctor could be finished with him, “whether or not I accept it?” The doctor seemed to consider that for a moment before he spoke again.

“Say I cured your somnambulism, would you still feel the label fit?” Will sighed, “yes, sir.”

“May I ask why?”

“You can ask whatever you want,” Will muttered, allowing his agitation to sway the course of conversation, “and if I don't answer, you'll use that.” He nodded to the cane, he had felt it's bite both at his father's hand and that of his teachers, it was a sting he'd never managed to grow accustomed to.

The doctor's face was unreadable, and Will tensed to take the beating he was sure he'd given him reason to enact.

Instead, the man merely tilted his head and began to speak again.

“If you truly think I would be so cruel to my patients, then i'm surprised you would take the risk to agitate me.”

He stood then, circling the desk to lean against it's edge in a way that allowed him to tower over Will and block most of the light with his broad frame.

“Why?” He asked, referring to his earlier question.

Will swallowed, hoping his voice wouldn't quiver and betray how small he felt.

“I burdened my father,” He tried to sit a little taller in his seat, but was sure he'd only managed to resemble a fidgeting child instead. “I could tell when he had done something wrong, tell when-”

Will couldn't help the snort of bitter laughter that the memory elicited, “-when he'd been to the brothel. He beat me silly for even suggesting it but I could see by the shock in his eyes that I had been right.” Will shook his head slowly, “I disturbed him.”

“It sounds to me as though you were the one with the burden.”

Will shrugged, not sure whether the doctor was referring to his ability to read people or the abuse he suffered at his father's hands.

“Though I hardly think keen observation skills warrant the label you've settled under,” Dr Lecter leant back a fraction, just enough to ease the air of authority he had been giving off.

“I got confused,” Will admitted, “It wasn't just my father, I could...read...anybody, *everybody*,” He bit his lip, to hell with his father's rules. “After mother died it got easier to-” He paused a moment, trying to choose the right words,

“-to *empathise*.”

“Instead of just reading others, you became them?” Will nodded.

“Are you becoming me, Will? Simply by sitting across from me?” There it was, the blatant curiosity that he had always evoked in the mental health specialists he had been subjected to.

“No. I'm older now, I've built barriers.”

Hannibal hummed again, gazing up at the clock to his left and pushing away from the desk to walk towards the door.

“Nurse Bloom will show you to the dayroom, there are still several hours until lights out,” The doctor stood aside as Will passed him through the open door, to be met by the kind brunette in the hallway.

“I look forward to our next meeting, Will,” He heard Dr Lecter call after him.

~

The dayroom could easily be described in three words, pungent, raucous and *grating.* He stood still for a moment, where he'd been left in the archway, with the crippling awareness that this would be his place of residence from then on.

The walls were a flaking yellow, though it would be fair to assume that it was not the wallpaper's original colour, and the hardwood floor had been chipped and scuffed beneath shuffling feet. To Will's right, tucked haphazardly into a metal shelving unit, were a collection of outdated magazines and board games, no doubt missing most of the pieces. In the opposite corner, a record player was perched atop a side table. In was in surprisingly good condition, though it was most likely due to the cage, resembling a black fireguard, that encased it entirely.

He made his way towards the windows, sidestepping a heavily sedated patient in a straight jacket who had taken to sitting crossed legged in the centre of the room, head swaying side to side, drool drip, drip, dripping to gather as a damp spot on his cotton trousers.

It was a pleasant surprise to find that the glass had not been reinforced with steel bars, and Will wiped a patch of dust and grime away with his sleeve to look out at the land he had crossed as a free man just over an hour before.

Most of the patients were gathered at the cluster of tables and chairs, all nailed securely to the floor, some playing cards, other's chewing them and as much as Will loathed to join them, the day had worn on him and he ached to sit and attempt to ignore his surroundings. He picked the table furthest from the others, and the chair with the least stains, and began fiddling with some discarded wooden counters.

If he had been home, he would have been with his bloodhounds at that moment, throwing sticks for them since he couldn't bear to take them hunting, another part of him that his father despised was his softness towards animals. It was just another sign of weakness in his eyes,

there was nothing he loved more than watching the dogs tear into a freshly caught fox or coyote. Will knew it made him feel powerful, to hold life and death in his hand from the safety of a soft leather horse saddle.

He span a counter on it's side, watched it blur and then wobble and finally fall still. With a sigh, he plucked it up to spin again but this time a wrinkled hand slammed down atop it and wrenched it away.

“You made it dirty,” the swindler hissed, rubbing it against his sleeve and then staring down at the creases in his palms, as if Will had infected the thing.

“Oh, I-I'm sorry?” Will peered up at the his face, stunned to find that it was not an elderly man as he had suspected, merely an incredibly sodden one, most likely in his twenties. Overgrown hair stuck flat to either side of his face, and the skin as far up as his wrists was patterned with water wrinkles.

He sniffed as if distraught and whimpered; “Shouldn't have touched it, the showers are closed.”

Will turned away, he didn't want to delve into that type of mania, he went to stand only to have the man's hushed panic rise in volume.

“This is *your* fault,” He spat out, jumping to his feet and raising his hands as if to show Will the non-existent, offending mark.

Some of the other patients stirred from their seats, one man beginning to sob with his head pressed against the far wall. Will felt his chest tighten in anticipation, noting the orderlies move from where they had been silently stationed by the entrance.

“Calm down, Jerry,” one of them ordered, one hand held up in a placating gesture even while the other reached for a baton at his belt.

“No, no, no!” Jerry screamed, tearing at his top in a attempt to pull it off over his head. “It's all dirty!” He tried to lunge at Will then, knees thudding against the table between them, as if he hadn't seen it there.

In a second, the batons had been unsheathed, and Jerry was sent to the floor with one blow where he doubled over and howled in agony.

Will gasped, falling back against the wall as the scene unfolded before him. Jerry scrambled and clawed while the first orderly pinned him down with a knee to the centre of his back and the other took a full needle from a nurse, who had rushed in upon hearing the commotion, and plunged it without an ounce of care into the man's neck. He went limp. Will keeled over and emptied his stomach contents across the shoddy floor.

Chapter End Notes

Their brains are like porcupines
And mine's a paper ball
I know they don't understand they don't get us at all
Their moss mangles polyanthus
And mine's a paper ball
~Of Montreal

Heimdalsgate Like a Promethean Curse

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will rose with the sun the next morning, its light prying through the narrow window and dancing across his fluttering eyelids. It was with a sinking feeling in the pit of his stomach that he realized where he was, and his wrists brushed against the opened leather cuffs on the bed as he hurried to distance himself from its creaking metal structure.

After the pandemonium the previous evening, they had all been rounded up and herded through the corridors like livestock to be locked away in their rooms. Will had been almost relieved to escape the uneasy atmosphere until the heavy metal door had slammed shut behind him and he'd been left with nothing but the faded past torments of his new room to keep him company. He had slept haltingly, finally beginning to doze only to be jolted awake by the sound of scratching and crying further down the hall. On one such occasion, he had peaked out through the tray gap in the door, to see two orderlies marching towards the source of the noise, batons at hand. The lock to his door groaned and Will backed away a few steps, eyeing the orderly who entered with two small, plastic cups.

“Your pills, Mr Graham.” He said in a mock English accent, bowing and extending his hand in the way a butler might.

Will fought down the urge to knock the cup from his hand and watch the powder blue pills skitter across the floor. He'd known his wealth would be an issue here, as it always was with peers, but he hardly expected the orderlies to hold it against him. Though working in such a shoddy institution, he supposed, could lead to some resentment. He took the offered cup and dry-swallowed the pills, waving his hand when the water was offered his way and ignoring the glint of amusement in the orderlies dull green eyes as he did so.

“Do I need to check under your tongue?” He asked, in the same insufferable attempt at the Queen's English. Will did not offer a retort, fully aware of the metal baton on the man's belt.

“I hardly think that will be necessary, Mr Brown” came a familiar, heavily accented voice from the hallway.

Dr Lecter rounded the corner then, to join them in the room, with a mannerly smile that Will could see straight through. He was not unsure how long the man had been listening, but by slight tightness around his eyes he could guess that it had been a while and that he too had had his wealth thrown back at him. It was a perfectly constructed mask, the reverse of which Will had tried countless times to forge, a shield of sorts, from those around him. Mr Brown, however, took it at face value and smiled genially back, before making his leave. After watching him turn the corner, Will felt himself relax minutely.

“How did you sleep?” The doctor asked then, bringing his clipboard, which Will suspected was for show more than anything else, up to his eyes to scan.

“Well, thank you.” He lied, in the way he had learned to do when people asked about his wellbeing as a child.

The Doctor hummed in the way that, Will had come to realise, meant he didn't fully believe him.

“Then you'll be bright and alert for our morning session,” He acquiesced, crossing something out from a list of print too small for Will to read from where he stood. “I'll see you after breakfast.”

~

Will quickly came to learn that mornings held the most humiliating part of the daily schedule. He was lined up with the rest of the patients and they were led like schoolchildren to the bathrooms where he was stripped of his pyjama-like clothing and directed to one of the many rusted shower heads protruding from the wall.

The nurses and orderlies watched over them as they scrubbed with the small mounds of soap they'd been given, naked bodies uncomfortably close to touching. Will realised, with a small amount of relief, that his was not the only one sporting scars, bruises and burns; though whether such marks were present on the other's before they were institutionalised was hard to determine. Not wanting to be caught gazing at the other men, Will ducked his head and cleaned himself quickly, only looking up to peer nervously at Jerry and check he was not in the same state he had been the night before.

The man had been the first in line for the showers, rocking almost excitedly from foot to foot, and where most of the other patients had simply rinsed themselves off and left, Jerry remained beneath the stream of lukewarm water, scrubbing mostly with his nails now that the soup had wilted down to a pebble-sized yellow lump.

Will dried off quickly and was grateful to accept his infantile attire, an exact copy of the outfit he had worn the day before.

Whatever the pills he had been given were, the effects started to kick in at breakfast. Will took his seat at one of the already overcrowded benches that lined the dining hall just as grey trays of dry bread and beans in a watery sauce were placed upon them. There was a general numbness to his senses, and as he took his cup of water up in hand he could feel a phantom texture, not unlike raw cotton, spread between his fingers and the plastic beneath them. The water felt heavy on his tongue and he blinked twice, slowly, watching his bread curl and the pale beans shimmy in their compartment.

He stayed that way, eyebrows lofted, watching his breakfast breathe, until a commotion sounded from the doorway.

“I'm not done!” Came a familiar voice, distress reverberating from the walls to shatter the shield Will had been able to cling to until that point. He felt his chest tighten as he tried and failed to tear himself from the man's shoes.

Jerry made his entrance then, hair sodden and dripping onto his dishevelled shirt, clearly forced over his head by someone else. He flinched away from the firm hand of nurse Selmon, who wore a stern expression as she tried to guide him to his seat.

“There'd be no water left at all if I allowed you to stand there all day like that,” She admonished, though her tone fell short of harsh and she only managed to sound wistfully resigned.

Will kept his eyes trained on the tray before him, panic hissing like static in his skull. He could feel every iota of Jerry's hysteria, the repulsion he felt at the very idea of taking a seat alongside the others and hazarding the mess of spilled beans and breadcrumbs. Not only that, but Nurse Selmon's abjection trickled towards him too, lapping at his ankles and rising sodden through his cotton trousers. All that and he hadn't even lifted his head to look in their direction.

He brought his hands to the sides of his face, fingers twisting and tugging at his own hair, palms pressed flat against his ears, as he tried desperately to shut them both out. It was impossible to calm himself, so unsure where his panic ended and Jerry's began.

“Please stop,” He whispered, knowing his words would have no effect.

The bread was practically writhing now, the entire table bending and bowing. He risked a glance to the patient opposite himself, blue eyes meeting affable brown, but he could see beyond that to the years of locked doors and hushed warnings.

'A Down Syndrome child.'

The words were hissed from nowhere and everywhere and Will wanted to scream then, that he was so much more than that. Kind and capable. Jerry yelled from across the room, nothing comprehensible, and made to dart past the nurse.

“Please stop!” Will's voice wasn't his own, strained and shrill. “Stop stop *stop*!”

Amidst the warping surroundings and torrent of unwelcome emotion, Will was entirely unaware of the heavy footsteps approaching and the distant warning of '*hey, knock it off*.'

He lurched from his seat, eager to distance himself from it all, only to barrel into the approaching orderly and send them both, with a loud thud, to the floor. He was atop him, limbs tangled, and he struggled to right himself once the eager glint in the orderly's eye became apparent. Permission to enact violence. '*Hit it son, with the shovel, that's right boy!*'

He threw Will from atop himself, hands practically shaking with excitement.

“On your knees,” The words were spat, baton already drawn.

Will swallowed thickly, chest heaving, eyes flicking to the door.

'I have to get away from this.'

'Why does the clock keep watching me?'

'He ate her, he fucking ate her'

'I need to go back to the playground, make the little ones nervous'

His walls had never crumbled so completely, the thoughts and feelings of other's so clear in his head that he felt himself drowning in it, gagging on their coagulated suffering.

The baton made contact with his side then, forcing the air from his lungs. The bend of his legs were the next target and he felt them slip out from under him, knees hitting the hard tile floor with a crack. Will only just managed to bring his hands out in front of himself to break his fall, narrowly escaping a cracked tooth or split lip, but then a booted foot pressed down hard on his back, sending him to his stomach. His hands were wrenched behind his back, his pained hiss ignored.

“Let's see what the Doctor has to say about this.”

~

The morning had passed so slowly that it was as if the clock itself were mocking him. Hannibal shifted his files into a neat pile on his desk and sat back in his chair, considering a trip to the basement level of the asylum.

His ears pricked at the sound of gruff threats and reluctant shuffling behind the heavy oak door, and he was already at his feet before the knock sounded. He strode across the office, then paused with his hand half extended towards the handle. He would not have whoever stood beyond the threshold thinking him desperate for their company.

It was a pleasant distraction to find his newest patient, looking quite dishevelled and red in the face, at his door. He stepped aside as the orderly manhandled him forwards, careful not to let his eyebrows raise in surprise as the man's, or more accurately *boys',* misbehaviour was relayed to him. He had not expected the timid creature capable of causing such a commotion.

The orderly was excused, and Hannibal took a few moments to observe the boy's behaviour. Steel blue eyes scanned the floorboards nervously, brow drawn taught in distress. His shoulders were hunched, and Hannibal had to resist the urge to reach out and correct his posture. It was a peculiar reaction, as much as he enjoyed observing his patients, he had never actually cared about how they presented themselves.

“Well, this is very disappointing,” He said, when he was sure the silence had become uncomfortable.

He watched Will's Adam's apple bob nervously, noticed the wringing of pale hands, and decided the punishment would be swift. The orderly who had reported him had a tendency to exaggerate details if it meant a harder beating. Besides, the boy had peaked Hannibal's interest almost as soon as he'd entered his office the day before, it would hardly do to traumatise him beyond ever opening up.

“I must ask you to step out of your trousers,” He spoke firmly, making his way back to his desk where the cane lay in wait. “Underwear too,” he added, almost as an afterthought.

When he turned, the patient was doing as asked, eyes still cast to the floor. Hannibal watched him step from his garments, hands protecting his dignity despite the fact that the oversized shirt was long enough to do that itself. He was beautiful, by anyone's standards, and Hannibal was entirely pleased that the boy had been sent to his establishment.

“Hands here,” He said, patting the back of one of the chairs with the cane, “this will be over quickly.” He was unsure why he felt the need to comfort the boy. It was an unexpected reaction and he pondered over it for a few seconds before storing the feeling away to examine in depth later.

Will's posture, remarkably, had become more relaxed. He by no means looked *comfortable*, but he had stopped scouring the floor as if looking for an escape hatch and his hands were resting still at his sides. *Curious boy*, Hannibal resisted saying aloud.

His hands gripped the upholstery where Hannibal's had been, he was bent slightly at the waist, head hanging solemnly forward. Hannibal circled him and swished the cane through the air, for no reason other than he enjoyed the sound it made. Will didn't tense in the way that the other patients did. If anything, he seemed relieved to be positioned as he was, facing Hannibal's desk.

Upon reaching his spot at Will's back, he found that the shirt still hung too low on his slight frame, covering the boy's ass. He could whip his thighs instead and it would count as adequate punishment, but it was not Hannibal punishment of choice and this was, after all, *his* asylum. It would be tasteless however, to ask the patient to hold the shirt-tail up himself, and so he opted to have Will remove it instead, watching intently as the boy bared himself entirely.

His curiosity turned to something closer to displeasure as he noted the various marks and bruises on the boy's torso. A moment ago, his senses had been alight at the prospect of seeing the boy bare, but what he saw now only left a bitter taste in his mouth.

Will had been caned before, multiple times across his back, though some of the scars reached as far as the boy's backside. Most were raised white lines, where the cane had cut into his skin and scarred over, though some were still purple. His upper arms bore the marks of countless cigars, put out upon his skin, darkened circles, some still red and raw. Hannibal's top lip curled in animosity towards the man who had left such devastatingly sad marks on a boy that should only ever be seen as devastatingly *beautiful*.

The weight of the cane suddenly felt unbearable in his hand and Hannibal returned it, with more force than necessary, to his desk. Will jolted in surprise at the noise, but kept his position, taking measured breaths.

“I believe you've learnt your lesson,” Hannibal said, when he felt he had regained enough control over himself to do so calmly. “Next time you'll receive more than just a warning.” He promised, though he was becoming more and more unsure of his sincerity in that statement by the second.

Will looked up through his curls warily, fingers still digging into the cushioned back of the chair. From where he stood, Hannibal had full view of Will's cock, but he didn't allow his

gaze to linger now that his stoicism had been thrown off balance.

“You may stand,” He added, when Will remained where he was.

“Thank you, Sir” came he quiet reply, as Will straightened and brought his hands to cover himself once more.

He looked dizzy, confused almost, his eyes flickering from the walls to the floor and then the implements on Hannibal's desk, with a look of unease.

“You may dress,” Hannibal tore his eyes away, returning to the files he had abandoned before the boy's arrival.

“Our session is due to start briefly.”

With a nod, Will hurried to his clothes, dressing quickly and waiting to be told to sit as he had when they'd first met. He took the same seat he had last time, avoiding the chair he had leaned against only moments before.

“Tell me what caused your outburst this morning,” Hannibal demanded suddenly, aiming to take back the higher ground that he had never, in truth, stepped down from before.

Will looked to the far wall, as if it were personally to blame.

“My barriers are down,” He whispered.

“And what brought this on?” Hannibal asked, genuine interest colouring his words.

Will twisted uncomfortably in his chair, entirely unaware of how tempting he appeared to the Doctor when he squirmed that way.

“It was the- what were those pills, this morning?” He raised his voice slightly and Hannibal lifted one hand to placate him.

“Minor tranquilizers, we administer them to all of our new patients to help them settle in.”

“I-I can't-” The boy drew his hand towards his mouth, as if to bite his nails, before thinking better of it and returning them to his lap.

“Can't what, Will”?

“I can't block them out like this.”

“Block who out?”

“*Everyone*!” He was clearly agitated, letting his head fall into his hands. Hannibal chose to overlook his disrespect in light of this new discovery.

“Can you block me out?” He felt a thrumming in his chest, equal parts eager and anxious to hear the answer.

“I-” Will sighed, “It's quieter here, *you're* quieter.”

Hannibal felt his ego swell, his own mask carved so precisely, that even in this state, the empath could not see through it.

Will let his hands drop away from his face, “Please don't make me go back downstairs.” Hannibal hummed, as if his mind were not already made up.

“The bedrooms are off limits at this hour,” he said, wondering if he were perhaps being unnecessarily cruel. “Where would you suggest I put you until the effects of the pills wear off?”

“I-I don't know,” Will sniffed, and Hannibal had to assess his own feelings once more as something akin to tenderness wormed its way past his ribcage.

He exhaled loudly, pretending to be put upon and looked back down at the folders on his desk. They were arranged perfectly, by date.

“I suppose I could allow you to stay here, if you find a way to make yourself useful.”

Will's head shot up and he nodded eagerly, biting his bottom lip.

It was a lip that Hannibal would not mind biting himself, but instead he handed the boy his stack of files and said simply:

“Alphabetise these, please.”

Chapter End Notes

Chemicals, don't flatten my mind
Chemicals, don't mess me up this time
Know you bait me way more than you should
And it's just like you to hurt me when I'm feeling good
~Of Montreal

The Past is a Grotesque Animal

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Nurse Selmon tells me you suffered an episode last night," It was nearly midday and Dr Lecter had allowed Will to work silently up until that point.

The boy was sat back on his heels, returning some of the Doctor's anatomy books to the lower shelves of a bookcase. Despite the lack of pills that morning, the man's offer to assist him in his office had been repeated, and Will had eagerly accepted, happy to do anything to stay away from the day room.

"She told me that too," Will replied, pausing with a particularly heavy hardback in his hand and running his fingers over the illustration of the wound man on its cover.

"You don't believe her?" Hannibal asked from behind his desk.

"I don't remember."

He had dreamt, as he always did, of killing his father. This time it was a rather aggressive bludgeoning and when he awoke he was restrained with the dreaded leather cuffs, sheets soaked in his own sweat.

"She said you were manic upon wakening," Hannibal's chair legs screeched against the floorboards as he stood.

Will flinched, dropping the book in his hands with a resounding thud.

"Sorry," He mumbled, retrieving it quite hastily and brushing non-existent dirt from the book-sleeve.

"Not at all," the doctor was closer than Will had expected, having approached him silently, "I apologise for startling you."

There was a moment of silence as Will slid the book into its rightful place, with Hannibal still standing over him. "Do you remember what you dreamt of, Will?"

"No."

That disbelieving hum again, and a large hand came to rest on Will's shoulder. He tensed, expecting to be boxed across the ears for lying, but the hand only lingered there a moment before the Doctor retracted it. It was such a gentle touch, entirely unexpected from the man who had appeared so tyrannical when Will had first arrived. Will's chest constricted slightly, the dulcifying contact far apart from the strikes he was so familiar with.

"I dreamt of my father," he relented, licking his lips nervously as he wondered what he'd have to do to receive the same gentling a second time. Some deep, mangled part of him

yearned for it.

“It's quite ordinary to dream of someone you miss, especially having only just left him.” The Doctor's shoes tapped their departure as he strode back to his desk. Will's shoulders slumped.

The scratching of a pen on paper sounded from behind him as Dr Lecter returned to his work. Will was finished with the books, but he remained kneeling against the hard wood floor.

“I don't miss him,” a pause, then; “you've seen the scars, Doctor."

The pen stilled.

“Perhaps that is something we could talk about.”

Will bit his lip, safe in the knowledge that the Doctor could not see his face.

“At our next session?” He asked, hopeful that he could delay delving into that particular subject.

“Now,” It was hardly a suggestion, still, Will lingered where he was. “Come here, boy.”

Reluctantly, he got to his feet and shuffled towards the man's desk, hovering by his chair of choice.

“Sit, please,” The corner of Dr Lecter's lips twitched upward, increasingly fond. He waited for Will to do as asked and then leant back in his chair, one leg crossed over the other.

“When did he first hit you?”

Blunt. Will decided he preferred that to the possibility of the doctor hedging around the subject to tease bits and pieces from him.

“Not until my mother died.”

“Before her death he was kind?”

“No,” Will shook his head, his father was never kind, “distant. After, he'd hurt me if he had to be in my presence for too long.” A sad exhale, “I learnt to make myself scarce.”

The Doctor seemed thoughtful for a moment, eyes scanning Will's features as if searching for a lie. He'd find none, Will was resigned to having no choice but to share. “You're eighteen, Will.”

“-yes” He answered hesitantly.

“I find myself perplexed,” Dr Lecter pushed his chair back to stand, more quietly this time. “You are an adult and, other than your empathy and trouble sleeping, you seem more or less sane.”

“My father has some sway in the community,” Will supplied, predicting the question before it was asked. “He has money, can offer employment to the wayward son's of Doctors, I decided to save him the trouble of all that and come easily.” His voice broke at the end of the sentence.

“And now,” the Doctor began, rounding his desk to stand over Will, “he has no sway over you, as I am in control of everything that happens behind these walls.”

Will ducked his head, wishing it were true. He'd sooner entrust himself to Dr Lecter than return to his father.

“He, um-” Will trailed off, not wanting to offend his Doctor but knowing that his father would not be above bribing him if he wanted something done a certain way.

“I have your best interest in mind, Will. I happen to know what you're thinking and no, I have money of my own. There is nothing your father can offer me, you are under my sole care.”

“I- good,” Will whispered, suddenly feeling very small.

He glanced towards the strong hands of the man towering over him and quashed the urge to reach out and touch them, to run his fingers over the intricate veins and press the calloused pads to his lips. He almost jolted when one was extended out towards him, an odd gesture that sent nervous tremors dancing along Will's spine.

“Come, I have something I'd like you to see,” and then warm fingers were surrounding his own, so much smaller and worried down to whitlows.

He was released when they exited the office, but the gentle prickle of the Doctor's touch remained and Will could barely focus on anything else, wanting to hold onto him again. He followed Dr Lecter down a flight of stairs, then another, ducking his head almost guiltily when the orderlies and nurses passed them by. It was only when they were passing through a sliding metal door and into a dark stretch of cells, that Will realised they were on the basement level. He stopped abruptly, edging away from the threshold and shaking his head. It was naive of him to think he could be anything but a burden to the Doctor. How relieved the man would feel when Will was locked up under the asylum.

“I'm sorry,” he whispered, wringing his hands together to stop them from trembling. Dr Lecter turned, looking mildly bewildered.

“May I ask what for?”

“I-I-” Will stuttered nervously, “I don't know.” He admitted at last, head down.

It seemed to click for the Doctor then.

“Will, I'm not going to leave you down here,” he assured him, stepping closer and placing a hand on his shoulder. The boy leaned into the touch. “Once we're done here, we will return to my office until lights out.”

Will exhaled audibly, peering up through curls as if to determine the truth in the doctor's words. It didn't seem right. He had never deserved kindness before, what had he done that the Doctor was so willing to offer it to him now? Eventually, he nodded and shuffled after Dr Lecter, through dimly lit halls lined with even dimmer cells.

“We keep the *criminally* insane here. As head Doctor, it is expected of me to help determine why they committed the crimes they are accused of.”

Will stayed no more than two steps behind the doctor, shying away when shadows shifted in their cages, drifting towards the bars to sneer and spit at them as they passed.

“I was hoping, with your particular skills, you might be able to help me.”

Will's stomach twisted uncomfortably, he would hate nothing more than to take on the mindset of psychotic murderers, but he owed the doctor now; if not for letting him work in his office, then for desisting in his caning. The air around them was stale and as they traveled further between the stretch of cells, the sound of harsh whispering voices died down to be replaced by the echoing drip of leaky pipes.

“Here,” Dr Lecter announced, coming to a stop so abruptly that Will very nearly collided with him.

He righted himself, biting his lip and squinting in an attempt to see what creature inhabited the dark space behind the thick metal bars before them. His heart thrummed little and quick beneath his ribs and he pulled his hands up into his sleeves so that Dr Lecter might not notice how badly he was shaking.

“Dr Lecter,” The man who had spoken emerged from the darkest corner of his cage, hair and beard shorn short. His lips twisted into a smug half-smile as his eyes, more grey than blue, came to rest on Will. “What *do* we have here?”

Will shifted so that he was half shielded behind Dr Lecter.

“Abel,” the doctor bowed his head in greeting, “this is William, another patient here.”

Abel narrowed his eyes, “and what, pray tell me, is dear little William doing down here with the big bad wolves?”

He had a whimsical way about him, that drew Will in, even as it caused his discomfort to grow.

“Mr Gideon killed his wife and in-laws this past Christmas,” Lecter turned to Will, ignoring Abel completely. “No prior record of violence, I'd like you to discern his motive please.”

He stepped aside, leaving Will feeling rather exposed. He shifted from one foot to another, wishing he could shrink back into the shadows, away from the two sets of eyes pinning him in place.

“I have to say, I'm intrigued,” Abel declared in a sing-song voice, “give it your best shot, kiddo.”

Will took a deep breath, knowing full well that if he refused the doctor, he'd be throwing away his chance at avoiding the day room. He bit his lip as he peered up, eyes darting back to the floor when they met Gideon's and saw the fiendish sparkle there.

“Take your time, Will,” Dr Lecter's hand came to rest on Will's shoulder and he felt himself unwind ever so slightly.

The doctor’s thumb began to rub soothing circles into the tension there and Will found he would do almost anything to keep the warmth of the doctor's hand seeping through his cotton top. Will lifted his eyes a little, deciding to take in the man's posture first, to work his way up to the more frightening details when he was ready. Gideon had maintained a wide stance, feet parted at shoulder width, hands resting carelessly at his hips when he was not gesturing in a way that matched his zealous words.

“He's confident,” Will said, in a voice so small that he sounded several years younger than he really was. “but not as confident as he'd like you to believe, he knows this is your playground.” Will looked to Dr Lecter's chin, continuing when the smile there encouraged him to do so.

He allowed his gaze to travel up to the man's torso, chest puffed as if affronted, shoulders tense enough that Will knew he had the man's full attention.

“He um-” Will cleared his throat when his words came out raspy and unsure, reminding himself he had never in the past been wrong. “-he isn't a psychopath, nor a narcissist, he's just slightly too unsure of himself to fit either category.”

He leant into the hand at his back then, to give him the confidence to go further, to remind him that he would not be beaten for this, that he might actually make someone proud. That thought alone was enough to force his eyes up to Gideon's face. He took in the stiffness of the lips there, the smugness gone now, noted the way the man ground his jaw.

“He's prone to outbursts of anger,” Will said, the rattle of cutlery filling his ears as he began to piece the murder scene together in his mind. He saw himself holding the carving knife, stood tall but tense over the turkey. “Christmas is always a stressful time of year,” Will lamented.

He felt a dull assurance settle beneath his skin, taking on Abel so fully that his own posture righted itself, and he took a step towards the bars, allowing the hand at his back to fall away, as he met Abel's eyes. They were sharp, not entirely angry; defensive if anything.

“Oh,” Will breathed, plunging the knife into the heart of his wife and slitting his father-in-law's throat. He tossed the table aside, china and glass smashing and scattering, gravy spilling in thick puddles, twisting between the tiles alongside streams of blood. He gripped his mother-in-law's hair tugging her away from the front door to slice her neck open and let her drop beside her husband.

“He-he,” Will swallowed the lump in his throat, falling to his knees until the blood soaked, warm and viscous, into the material of his dress pants. “Part of him *regrets* it.”

Will blinked and he was back in the damp and stagnant basement, with the lingering sense of someone else's outrage and sorrow.

“Well, well, very astute,” Gideon practically purred, leaning against his cool metal confines. There was something insidious in his tone and Will, suddenly aware that he was practically touching the bars between them, skittered backwards, flinching when Dr Lecter came to stand before him.

“Remarkable,” the Doctor breathed, pulling Will towards himself to take in the look of fear and confusion on his face now that he was himself again. He removed his grip on the boy's shoulders and, as he had hoped would happen, his patient stumbled forward allowing him to hold his head firmly against his chest in the guise of support.

Utterly touch starved, the boy needed attention and a firm hand to guide him. The boy's father was a fool, but his maltreatment of his son had only made it easier for Hannibal to step in and allow Will to see his full potential.

“He's a keeper,” came Gideon's voice, the man leaning against his metal confines.

Hannibal flashed him a feral smile over Will's shoulder, all pointed teeth and twisted lips, before ushering the boy back to his office.

Chapter End Notes

I've explored you with the detachment of an analyst
But most nights we've raided the same kingdoms
And none of our secrets are physical
None of our secrets are physical
None of our secrets are physical now
~Of Montreal

The Party's Crashing Us Now

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The boy was intriguing.

Hannibal found waking to the idea of seeing him a pleasant change in a schedule that had long ago become a quotidian drag of questionable pills and brown dossiers. Even the patients he kept confined to the basement were failing to maintain his interest as they once had. Where he had been meticulous in regards to his schedules and sessions, he was now becoming ruthless with his treatment of his other patients, going as far as to silently resent them for the very fact that Will could not be present during his time with them.

He told himself that it was not for this reason alone that he employed an underling. Dr Frederick Chilton was hired less than two weeks after Will's arrival, to tend to the milder patients that Hannibal had no time for. The new doctor was both snivelling and ambitious, practically hanging from Hannibal's coattails for recognition while blatantly begrudging the power he held. It was irksome, but having Will within his office more often soothed the itch to strike the smaller man or tear the tongue from his mouth to silence his prattling.

“Come here.”

Hannibal watched Will tense where he was sat, cross legged in the far corner of his office. He had been filling out the inventory of Hannibal's more unorthodox medications, trusted more and more each day with the tasks he was allotted, but there had been deep crease in his brow since the morning and he had now pressed his knuckles to his eyes on several occasions.

Will got to his feet quickly and crossed the room to stand before the desk.

“How are you feeling today, Will?” Hannibal leant back in his chair to better observe the boy, head bowed but piercing blue eyes lifted from beneath his fringe of a curls. There was intelligence in those eyes, the boy so bright but so brutally quashed.

“Fine, thank you sir.” His voice was no longer so quiet, nor did it shake so badly, but he was always deferential, always so appealingly polite.

Of course, Hannibal was aware that the boy was lying, and pressed his tongue to the roof of his mouth in a tut to make that much clear. Will closed his eyes in defeat.

“It's only a headache, sir. It won't affect my work, I promise.” His words took on a little trill when he was afraid he'd dissatisfied his Doctor, unaware that not once had he done anything of the sort.

Hannibal hummed and pushed his chair back slightly. The boy had seemed unwell since his last visit to the basement. Something about the Luthier who had made strings from human gut and, perhaps more disturbingly, created a human Cello, had upset Will. Hannibal had deemed

the artistry almost tantamount to his own work, but Will had a way to go yet, and the imagery had left him pallid and sombre.

He looked pointedly at the space between his legs, and Will followed his gaze understanding what he was being offered yet seemingly disbelieving that anything so soft and assuring would be granted to the likes of him. After a moment of distressed silence, he obeyed and rounded the desk to sit on the floor between the Doctor's legs.

Hannibal disliked the way the boy had curled in on himself, never daring to touch the Doctor of his own accord lest he be rebuffed, and so he placed a hand on each shoulder and slid Will firmly into place between his thighs, allowing the boys back to press against the soft leather of his chair. He felt him unwind almost immediately, scalp caressed by firm fingers and body half tucked under the desk.

With one hand still tracing circles over the smooth stretch of the boy’s neck, Hannibal returned to his work, finding himself only half attentive. It was a pleasant feeling, to have someone so willingly under his sway. Hannibal controlled everything within Bayview but nobody else, be it the patients or the staff, flourished under the control quite the way that Will did.

The boy was promising.

There was a resounding knock against the thick wood of the door then and Will startled where he was sat, rushing to push himself to his feet. With one hand, Hannibal kept him firmly in place and called out for whomever had interrupted them to step inside.

Panicked blue eyes shot up from between Hannibal's legs as the door creaked open, fully aware that the position they were in was entirely inappropriate. Hannibal merely moved his hand to fondle the curls at the base of Will's neck, safe in the knowledge that Nurse Bloom could not see Will as he was, with the desk's mahogany backboard reaching the floor. It was an amusing notion, having the boy hidden there, his own secret sat anxious yet increasingly devoted at his feet.

“Yes, Miss Bloom, how can I help you?” His demeanour gave nothing away, even as his hand trailed from the boy’s neck to his face, parting plump lips with his thumb. He felt the boy hesitate before flicking his tongue out gently and then sucking lightly on the digit.

“Sorry Doctor Lecter, I was wondering if you were going to be the one to induct out newest patient?” She asked, in that syrupy voice of hers.

Hannibal pretended to consider this a moment, actively controlling his posture as the boy's attentions made him want to rock his hips into the back of his head. “A Mr Miggs, I believe?”

The nurse nodded. Hannibal had read the man's file, he most likely suffered Multiple Personality Disorder and had been transferred across state from another facility after the orderlies there refused to treat him due to the...substances...he chose to throw their way.

“I believe Dr Chilton could benefit from this experience,” he stated, trying to appear impartial. He withdrew his thumb and ran his knuckles gently along Will's cheek.

“Yes, of course, I'll inform him now.”

“Thank you, Nurse Bloom,” Hannibal dismissed her, barely waiting for the door to shut before looking at the boy and finding wide eyes trained on him.

He winked down at him, and Will blushed, pressing his face into Hannibal's leg with a muffled sound of relief.

It had not escaped Hannibal's notice that the boy shared his particular proclivities, though he doubted very much that Will understood just how happy Hannibal would be to enact them with him.

He allowed the hand at the boy’s face to drop to his chest, sliding it down the neck of his cotton shirt to brush tenderly against a nipple.

Will gasped and froze in place, face still hidden, so Hannibal paused a moment with his hand still hovering over sensitive skin. Perhaps ten seconds passed, silent and tense, before the boy leant forward just enough to re-initiate the touch and so Hannibal praised him with a soft pinch that drew a lilting moan from his little lips.

“I find that I cherish you, Will,” He murmured, knowing the exact reaction his words would gain yet finding himself delighted regardless when a little choked sound was made.

He circled the other nipple and then pinched it in kind, before retracting his touch entirely and feigning the continuation of his work.

The boy managed to break off his keen on a hitched breath, but it did not go unnoticed. Hannibal left him to his own devices, sneaking a glance now and then to see him shift his hips uncomfortably.

“Would you like me to touch you again, boy?” He asked, noting the bulge in the boy’s pants that matched his own, though his was better concealed beneath layers of expensive clothing.

“Sorry sir, I know you're busy, I'll sit sti-”

“Yes or no,” Hannibal cut him off, before regretting his abruptness and hoping that he hadn't scared the boy away from the desired outcome.

“I-” Will still hadn't lifted his face from his doctor's leg, “-yes.” He decided eventually, in a voice barely above a whisper.

“Up, then,” Hannibal patted his leg, as if there were nothing out of ordinary about that request.

“On your lap?” Will asked, hesitantly, finally peeking up from his hiding space.

“Yes, facing me,” when Will didn't immediately move Hannibal raised an eyebrow, “unless you've changed your mind?”

That was enough to get him to his feet and soon the boy was sat tentatively across Hannibal's legs, straddling him. His face was lowered but Hannibal could still make out ruddy cheeks and lidded eyes beneath Will's curls.

The boy was intoxicating.

“I'll touch you here, I think,” Hannibal purred, pressing a hand firmly against the bulge and watching Will's eyes widen as if everything up until that moment had not been leading to this.

“But, I'm a man,” Will whispered, eyes glued to the large hand cupping him through his trousers.

Only just, Hannibal thought, but it was clear that age wasn't the boy's concern. He most likely thought this was a trap, some way to call him out on his homosexuality. Hannibal however, hardly needed any more reasons to keep him in the Asylum, Will wasn't going anywhere now.

“That does not concern me,” He opted to say instead, tugging at the waistband of Will's trousers to reveal his underwear and then slipping his cock free of that as well. “Does it concern you?”

The boy took a few measured breaths before biting his lip and shaking his head, watching attentively as

Hannibal's hand circled his length and began to tug in a firm, constant rhythm that had Will's legs shaking where they were stretched on either side of him.

He seemed to lose himself, if only for a moment, head hanging forward, hips rocking up into Hannibal's hand before he froze, pressing two bunched fists to Hannibal's chest and shaking his head vehemently.

Hannibal removed his hand immediately, keeping Will pinned down with a firm grip at his waist and tilting his head in honest confusion.

“Will?” He asked, suddenly concerned that his father's abuse had ventured into even more sickening territory.

The boy was nearly hyperventilating, and Hannibal briefly considered the drawer that housed his collection of sedatives before deciding on a kinder approach, an anomaly for him, and tugged Will flush against him. He moved his hands to the boy's back and began to stroke him there, only then realising how unpractised he was at consoling someone this way.

“Thirty lashes,” Will murmured against his chest when he had calmed down enough to speak.

“Pardon?” Hannibal asked, bewildered.

“Nurse Selmon said thirty lashes for this,” Will spoke slightly louder this time, peering down at his own exposed cock pressed between their bodies and making a stressed noise at the back of his throat.

It had gone soft now, in his panic, and so Hannibal reach down and tucked it away. Pulling the boy closer still and marvelling at the fact that he felt genuine distress on his behalf. He decided to ponder on that later and right the situation at hand for now.

“Will, you will not be punished for this,” He stated firmly, waiting for the boy to take a few, deep and even breaths before he continued. “I never really cane patients that are sent to me for this.”

He heard a small 'oh' breathed against his chest and then Will sat upright and mustered enough confidence to look him in the eye, if only briefly.

“But-but what if they tell?” He asked, eyebrows drawn, only now in concern for Hannibal and not himself.

“Then their word is written off as the lies or delusions of a mad man.” “Oh.”

“Besides, they would never tell the staff that I allowed them to escape a punishment, none of them lack as much logic as some of the nurses seem to believe.”

Will was looking at him sheepishly now, eyes red and swollen where tears had spilled over only a moment ago.

The boy was beautiful.

“I'm sorry,” he said, always apologising when there was no need to do so.

“It was a misunderstanding,” Hannibal soothed, helping him back down to the floor and pulling his head to rest against his leg. “You should get some rest now, sleep here.”

Will closed his eyes and, after the exhaustion of the day, managed to drift to sleep easily.

Hannibal watched him for a long while. He knew about the boy's night terrors; the nurses would fill him in each morning. 'Graham didn't sleep again' or 'Graham screamed the entire night'. It almost made his chest swell with pride to see that the boy slept so peacefully between his legs, that it was the only place the boy could really sleep at all.

When the door knocked a second time, Will didn't stir.

Mr Brown, the orderly that Hannibal had recently developed a disliking for, entered with a grave expression on his face.

“Sorry, Doctor, but do you know where Will Graham is?”

“No, I'm afraid I don't,” Hannibal answered, as Will shifted in his sleep to nuzzle further into his thigh. “May I ask why?”

“His *father's* here,” he huffed, “Says he needs to speak with you, says it's urgent.”

Hannibal risked a glance to the sleeping boy, breathing soft and warm against his leg. His hackles rose momentarily, the thought that the man who had had Will to himself all these

years would step foot into *his* domain.

He recalled Will's words then; '*My father has some sway*', and smiled. There was nothing the man could offer him, nothing the man had the right to demand. Hannibal excused Mr Brown and sat back in his chair, his smile spreading wider.

The boy was his.

Chapter End Notes

You're such a mystery
I just want to stand and stare
Nibble on your ear
And smell the ocean in your hair
I know you damage me
You leave me tangled in a knot
But when you reappear
I see Neptunian blues that eyes forgot
~Of Montreal

Let's Go for a Walk

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Doctor Lecter, pleased to meet you, I've heard great things,” the repulsive man in front of his desk said as he reached across its impeccably neat surface to shake hands.

Hannibal tilted his head in acknowledgement but did not speak, still scrutinising the man before him. He was a little taller than his son, closer to Hannibal's height, and his hair curled in the same way that Will's did, only it was a mop of salt and pepper strands. He wore a broad-shouldered suit jacket to give the illusion of a strength that he didn't have. Hannibal considered that Will must have gotten his eyes from his mother, or a grandparent perhaps, because those of the man who stood across from him now were narrow and murky green.

The man had a confidence about him that Hannibal couldn't wait to destroy. He leant back in his chair and stretched out his legs, watching Mr Graham sit without invite.

Will had been quickly roused from sleep and sent to help the other less-troublesome patients in the kitchen, entirely unaware of the meeting that was transpiring on his behalf. He'd be none-the-wiser that his father had ever stepped foot on this premises.

“What can I do for you today, Mr Graham?” Hannibal asked, conjuring a genial tone while the monster inside of him was aching to reach across the desk and snap the man's neck.

“Well, I'm here on behalf of my son, he's one of your patients.”

Hannibal pretended to consult his files for a moment, trailing his fingers down a list of names and pausing above Will's.

“I'm sure you'll know him. He's probably caused you a lot of trouble.” Mr Graham spoke apologetically, though it was only a mask and not nearly as well-crafted as Hannibal's own disguise.

“Will Graham, yes,” Hannibal replaced the file in his drawer, “I can assure you he's been no trouble, followed the rules to the letter, in fact.”

Hannibal found that his skin twitched uncomfortably when the man who had caused his boy so much suffering dared to speak ill of him.

“Ah, well, you'll have to share your secrets with me someday, doctor,” Mr Graham, laughed, though it sounded strained to Hannibal's ears.

“May I ask why you're here,” Hannibal felt his patience waning further, missing the presence of his boy and finding his father to be an incredibly lacking substitute. “It's not common for family members to visit on behalf of patients, once they've been admitted.”

“Yes, straight to business, I admire that in a man,” Mr Graham replied, though the tautness of his lips screamed that he was, in fact, quite offended by Hannibal's brashness. Good. “As it happens, I'm here to collect my son, he's needed at home.” He nodded his head once as he finished speaking as if his words were definitive and Will would be brought to him immediately.

Hannibal stopped his lips from curling into a sneer and instead manipulated his mask in a way that, to someone so self-absorbed as Mr Graham, he might look contrite.

“I'm very sorry,” He lied, “But Will Graham is in no state to leave this establishment.”

Mr Graham looked flustered, then appalled, before managing to force an affable smile of his own.

“Come now, Doctor Lecter, Will is my son, so it's only fair that I decide that myself.”

“Will is an adult, an adult unfit to make his own decisions and so his wellbeing falls to my hands, entirely.”

The man's face was turning beet red in anger now, and Hannibal praised himself on a job well done, even though he was not yet finished toying him.

“I thought-” Graham raised a fist to his mouth and coughed to compose himself when his words came out more indignant than he had meant them to. “I believe you said he was following the rules, that he has been no trouble.” Hannibal nodded.

“How then, is he unfit to be released to me?”

“Will is an impeccable patient, but suffers severely with night terrors, finds socialisation almost impossible and I have reason to believe he has, in the past, caused himself physical harm.”

“Self-mutilation,” Mr Graham scoffed, body drawn so taut that Hannibal wondered if the man might spring from his chair. “That's for hysterics and savages and-”

“I assure you his body was littered with bruises and cuts.”

Hannibal had never seen a face drain of colour so quickly. Mr Graham went pallid and suddenly rather quiet.

“There were even second-degree burns, we were sure that someone else must have inflicted them on him, some *sick sadist,”* He empathised, picking up on Graham's subtle flinch, “but Will assured us he'd inflicted them all on himself, that he had never been abused.”

“Abused, well no of course not, *abused*.” He huffed, “Under my roof, not at all, he-”

“So then, you see,” Hannibal reasoned, finding it easier to stay calm now that he could see his opponent unravelling before him, “Will needs to stay here, indefinitely.”

“What if I told you it was imperative that Will is returned to me?” Graham was clearly going to try shifting to another tactic, despite having already dug his own grave. “There has been a tragedy in the family, my wife, *late* wife, passed away with my child still inside her,” He stated, with no attempt to appear particularly torn up about it, “now, as

I'm sure you're aware I have somewhat of an empire regarding the railway.”

“Yes,” Hannibal nodded knowingly, “I believe you're a train driver?”

“A *train driv*-” Graham took a deep breath, “I own the entire damn railroad from here to Virginia!” He did stand from his chair then, chest puffed out indignantly, “Will needs to be there, to take over the reins when I'm too old to keep charge on my own. I thought I'd have another son but, well, it looks like I'll have to settle.”

Hannibal looked at him pointedly, eyes narrowed enough to show his displeasure, just not to its true extent. The man was an arrogant fool. Entirely oblivious to what he had given up, completely reckless in the way he spoke of the boy in Hannibal's domain. He'd be slaughtered as soon as enough time had passed that his death would not lead back to this visit; innards and entrails strewn out around him.

“I assure you,” Hannibal began, when Mr Graham caught on to his pique and finally took his seat, “that Will is in no shape to run a company, nor even to be allowed out into civilised society. You must understand, I have your son's best interest at heart.”

“I've already written him back into the will, all I need is for you to-”

“It's a *no*, Mr Graham,” Hannibal stated, getting to his feet.

It was Graham's turn to narrow his eyes. He tried to laugh good-naturedly but failed and made a noise not unlike strangled cattle instead.

“Clearly you've heard of my generosity doctor, tell me, what will it be?” He sighed, as if mildly put upon.

“I beg your pardon?”

“Well! What will it take? Money, prestige? I'm yet to find a man who doesn't have a price,” He laughed again, beginning to regain his earlier confidence, clearly believing he now held the upper hand.

He resembled a maggot offering up its own excretion.

“My Graham, please listen carefully,” Hannibal leant across his desk, watching the smaller man fall under his shadow, “I have money, I would wager at least twice the sum that you've amounted in your lifetime. I have prestige, I am widely respected within the medical community and *Doctor* is not my only title, I also happen to be a Count.” Mr Graham sneered, furious at being belittled, and made towards the door.

“There is nothing, in this world or in any other, that you can offer me to regain what you have wilfully lost,” Hannibal continued his litany, passing the man in several long, practised

strides to block his exit.

“I want you to look into my eyes as I tell you this-”

Mr Graham wilted when only a fraction of the seething monster within Hannibal's person suit was allowed to make an appearance.

“You will *never* lay a hand on your son again.”

He stepped aside then, leaning out from the doorway to watch the worthless cretin scurry away, nearly knocking a tray from a nurse's hands as he went.

“I'll see you very soon Mr Graham,” He called after him, graciously, person suit firmly in place.

~

He'd had an appointment with a patient he had failed to shift to Chilton's timetable after that, and so by the time he was free again it was already lights out.

Hannibal packed his briefcase and locked his office door behind him, nodding a pleasant greeting to the night nurses as they hung their coats along the wall of the staff entrance and brushed the lint from their skirts. It was only when he had descended the stone steps outside and made it halfway to his sleek, black Cadillac that he turned and looked up at the lines of narrow windows to the patient's rooms.

He thought of his boy, tossing fretfully on one of those awful, stained mattresses and was overcome with the desire to whisk him away and see him tucked beneath his own satin sheets. Will evoked a sort of virile possessiveness in him. Hannibal wanted to have the boy in every conceivable way, but more than that, he wanted to nurture him, to shape him into something more predatory so that he might avenge himself. He was a man used to acting on his impulses, but this particular desire was problematic. He sighed, spinning on his heel and dropping his brief case against the ceramic tile once he had re-entered the building. The staff were slim during the days, so night shifts left the building nearly vacant and perfect for inadmissible behaviour.

He reached Will's door in a matter of minutes and pulled the brass ring of keys from his trouser pocket, flinging it open to find his boy as he expected, sitting stiffly at the edge of his bed.

“Dr Lecter?” He asked, in a small, confused voice.

“Will,” Hannibal nodded his way, unsure what it was he had planned to do now that he was standing in the boy's doorway like a fool. “I have a new method of therapy for you, I think you'll find it helps you sleep.”

Will nodded willingly, relieved to have his Doctor with him in the darkness, even if just for a moment, and shifted along the bed so Hannibal could sit beside him. Hannibal frowned when the bedsprings groaned under his weight.

“Lay back, like this,” He murmured, quiet enough to not stir the other patients, and directed Will to lie with his head resting in his lap, hair fanning out around his face.

He pulled the ragged blanket up over the boy's body, frowning at the quality of it, though he had never paid the living conditions of his patients much attention before.

“Relax,” He whispered, feeling Will's body comply and go limp along the length of the bed.

Hannibal brought a hand up to Will's head and ran his fingers through his curls, murmuring in Lithuanian all the things he would never spoil the boy with in English.

How he, for the first time in many years, found himself anticipating seeing another's face each morning.

How for the sake of himself, he could not remove the boy from his thoughts.

How he'd even begun to construct a room in his memory palace dedicated solely to his boy.

How he would kill his father for him.

Then, no, how they would kill his father *together*.

He was so lost in his list of vows and assurances that he was entirely unaware the boy had fallen into peaceful sleep.

“You're beautiful,” he told him once, in English, for good measure.

Chapter End Notes

They are just as real as this world that I've grown to know
And though I have enjoyed myself I really have to go
Let's go for a walk so I can say goodbye to you.
That is unless you'd like to come too
~Of Montreal

Wraith Pinned to the Mist and Other Games

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“It's not your fault, come.”

Will coughed and spluttered, still doubled over, leaning against the cool stone wall of the basement corridor. He dragged a shaking hand across the back of his mouth and tried to swallow around the acidic taste coating his tongue.

When he was sure there was nothing left for his stomach to expel, he lifted his eyes from the yellow-green pile of regurgitated meatloaf and risked a glance at the man who had just spoken. Dr Lecter's arms were raised expectantly, and so Will hurried around his mess and buried his head between the man's lapels, feeling strong arms encompass him.

“I'm sorry,” He whispered for the second time.

“Don't apologize, perhaps I pushed you too hard,” Dr Lecter sighed, paying the rancid tang in the air no mind and burying his nose in sweat damp curls instead.

The words only served to make Will feel worse. His Doctor had been so generous, and he couldn't even do this one thing in return.

“I'll try again,” He said quietly, looking back at the closest cell where the newest resident was leering through the bars.

“Another time,” The Doctor murmured, meeting the patients glare until he backed away into the shadows of his cell.

Will sniffed and blinked his tears back furiously. It had been too difficult this time, too twisted and depraved. He had looked into the man and seen himself, pillow gripped hard between white knuckled fingers, pressing it down over the face of a squirming infant. He shuddered again at the thought, squeezing his eyes shut tightly enough that the black static behind his eyelids might block the image out.

“Can we leave now, please?” He all but begged.

“Yes, of course,” Dr Lecter released his grip on Will but, much to the boy's relief, kept his hand pressed gently against the small of his back.

~

In truth, this particular incident had been a test of endurance. Hannibal had found himself wondering where his boy's breaking point may lie. Will had struggled tremendously with what he had seen but it had not been a failure. As it happened, infanticide was where Hannibal himself preferred to draw a line.

As they walked side by side through the deteriorating corridors of the asylum, Hannibal did not fail to notice Will's cerulean gaze flicking his way, always searching for signs of anger or disappointment. He met his boy's eyes and, although he didn't smile, he allowed the corners of his own to crinkle just so, in a way that he knew the boy would easily be able to read.

The sigh of relief was audible but cut short by a sudden and very unwelcome intrusion.

“Doctor Lecter!”

Hannibal pressed his hand harder against Will's back and continued on towards the stairs to the second floor, as if he had not heard Dr Chilton scuttling after him. “*Doctor Lecter*!”

Schooling his expression, he turned to face the annoyance, reminding himself that the man's presence was a necessity if he wished to shirk his responsibilities and spend the time, instead, exploring the mind and body of his boy.

“Doctor Chilton, I'm afraid I'm in quite a hurry to-”

“This will only take a moment, I assure you. I merely need you to sign off on a treatment,” he thrust a sheet of paper into Hannibal's free hand and tapped his foot impatiently.

Hannibal would have liked to have like to have driven a nail through it to stop the man's incessant shuffling, instead he looked down at the file and frowned.

“I had the use of ice baths discontinued in this hospital several years ago,” He said, holding the paper out to return it and restraining the itch to snarl when the man did not take it.

“Well, consider this a proposition to reinstate the treatment, I found it quite effected when I worked at-”

“And I have found it rather *in*effective,” in truth Hannibal loathed something so lacking in innovation and so basic in design. He had put it into practice for only a few months before growing bored of the method. If anything, it had worked as a deterrent, causing several patients to refrain from certain behaviours that Hannibal would rather observe than quell.

It had not escaped Hannibal's attention that Dr Chilton showed a preference for the crueller treatments, though not in the same way Hannibal appreciated such methods. He himself enjoyed the psychological tinkering and the discoveries involved, while Chilton's interests lied closer to that of a schoolboy scorching ants while bored. Tasteless shows of power towards the only people he could hold it over.

Hannibal folded the paper neatly and slid it into Chilton's shirt pocket.

“Now, as you can see, I have a session with a patient so I-”

“Yes, Graham,” Chilton cut in, shooting a disdainful glance at the boy, “I was meaning to speak with you about him, I'm told he's causing a lot of trouble for the night staff.”

Will lowered his head under the scrutiny and Hannibal allowed his thumb to caress the boy's back, unseen.

“I'm not in the habit of discussing patients as if they were not here, besides Mr Graham is *my* patient and so no concern of yours,” with that he turned on his heel and finally swept Will away.

~

Dr Lecter made Will feel safe and exposed all at once, like he was comfortably cradled in a silk sling, hanging above an abyss.

He watched the man sit at his desk upon entering the office, and hung back by the door, waiting to be assigned a task.

“I've nothing for you to do today, boy,” Dr Lecter sighed, clearly still vexed from his earlier conversation.

Will sucked his bottom lip between his teeth, wondering if it were Dr Chilton’s accusation or his own failure in the basement that had made the doctor so terse with him. He turned to go, and hopefully find solace in kneading dough in the kitchen, but only got as far as resting his hand on the doorknob.

“Stay,” Dr Lecter called after him, “you may choose something to read if you wish.”

Will hovered where he was for a while, eyeing the rows of books that he had helped organise plenty of times, but had never been given permission to read. They were so far apart from the torn and tattered volumes kept in the day room. He took a few quiet steps towards them, deliberate in his attempt not to disturb the doctor from his work and make a nuisance of himself, and let his finger trail across the thick leather bindings.

He'd had books at home, though his father had often ripped and ravaged Will's favourites if the mood struck him to do so. Will had learnt early on, to keep the best stories hidden beneath his bed. On days that his father left for work, especially when Will was restricted to the house due to unconcealable bruises, he would curl up on the window seat where his mother had once sung to him, and read for hours on end as if he were starved for the tales between the pages.

It was an escape, a way to empathise with those that couldn't reach out and hurt him.

His fingers stopped above a familiar title and he carefully slid it from the shelf.

He turned then, book in hand, to find Dr Lecter watching him rather attentively and bowed his head, smiling shyly behind his curls. The doctor's chair was pushed back just so, and Will eyed the safe spot between his legs before approaching cautiously.

When he reached the smooth edge of the desk, he risked a glance at the doctor's face, finding the man examining him curiously, head tilted to the side.

“May I-” Will began, before trailing off when his doctor's gaze seemed to intensify.

He shook his head ever so slightly, and took a step away, cursing himself for being so foolish as to think the doctor had any time for him-

“You may,” came the unexpected reply, warm words cutting off his self-loathing abruptly.

Will breathed the smallest sigh of relief, hoping the doctor had not heard, and rounded to desk to settle at his feet.

“Thank you,” he said earnestly, looking up at him before settling back between his legs and opening the book in his lap. Hannibal handed him a glass of water, from the pitcher he kept on his desk.

“You're more than welcome, Will,” Dr Lecter sounded more himself now, and Will refused to allow himself to believe *he* was the one who had assuaged the doctor's irritation. “When we are alone here, you may always sit with me in this manner.”

Will swallowed the lump in his throat, feeling an unfamiliar warmth spread through his chest. He wanted to say thank you again, but the doctor had already returned to his work and he'd hate to distract him. The acerbic sting in his mouth subsided with a few sips of the water. Will read silently, losing his place on the page each time the doctor's hands sought him out beneath the table to run fingers through his hair or trace patterns on the back of his neck. After perhaps an hour, the sound of Dr Lecter's pen being placed down on the desk above him caused Will to look up from his book.

“I have often found myself wondering, if you would ever like to pick up where we left off the last time you sat with me this way?” The doctor met his gaze as he spoke.

Will blushed and looked away, he'd have liked nothing more now that he was confident no punishment awaited him. He nodded and brought the side of his thumb to his mouth to worry the skin between his teeth.

“I would prefer verbal confirmation, Will,” The doctor probed, reaching down to scoop the book from the boy's lap and place it open and face down on the desk.

“I would like it,” Will whispered, surprised by the throatiness of his own voice and the fast reaction between his legs.

“Stand, first,” Dr Lecter helped him up and positioned him at the side of his own chair, “I would like to undress you.”

Will curled his toes nervously, “but the scars,” he murmured shakily, “I don't want you to find me ugly.”

~

It was absurd that the boy could consider himself so. Not only was he a picture of classic beauty, but his mind was even more exquisite still. The scars made Hannibal want to snarl, but they were a sign of his boy’s resilience and endurance. Hannibal came to stand before Will and brought his knuckles to the boy's cheek, wiping a stray tear with his thumb. Even crying he was beautiful, and like a weeping statue, standing above the bodies of the dead – where he belonged.

“You are the furthest thing from ugly,” he assured him, encouraging him to lift his arms to ease the removal of his shirt.

He lowered his head to a thick white scar that climbed like ivy across Will's collarbone and up over his shoulder to assert his words with a kiss. The boy trembled beneath his lips.

“Are you mine, Will?” Hannibal asked, allowing his breath to tease warmth along the side of the boy's neck.

Will nodded quickly, shy but needy, and Hannibal could have taken him right there. Patience had always served him well in the past though.

“I'd like to hear you say it,” he pushed, knowing that the boy need only understand that a certain action would please Hannibal, to want to comply.

Will's lips quivered as he met Hannibal's eyes, an effort that did not go unappreciated, “I'm yours,” he whispered, with such sweet sincerity, that Hannibal found himself crushing their lips together, hungrily.

The boy made a small, surprised noise, unknowingly stirring a reaction between the older man's legs. Willing lips parted just enough for Hannibal to thrust his tongue past them, Will entirely accommodating. Eventually they parted to breathe.

“I ache to have you completely,” Hannibal blinked, shocked by his own confession. He expected the boy to hesitate, to freeze up or take a step back, but he only nodded and made a small, keening sound of consent.

“Out of your shoes,” Hannibal ordered, breathlessly, “trousers too.”

Will rushed to obey, slipping sockless feet from his pitiful excuse for shoes and only faltering for a brief moment before removing his pants as well.

~

He stood then, only in his briefs, before a fully dressed Dr Lecter, feeling inferior to the other boys he imagined the doctor chose to spend his time with. He curled his toes, feeling his skin heat up under the man's inspection. Dark eyes roamed fervently over his maimed little body, as if cataloguing each and every mark. Will bit back the urge to apologise for his appearance, for his mere *existence,* and bore the scrutinising seconds it took the man to close the small gap between them. Steady fingers were hooked beneath his waistband and Will spared a glance towards the unlocked door as he was bared completely. Dr Lecter stepped back and followed his gaze.

“No one will enter unless I give my permission,” he assured.

Will nodded, wringing his hands together, feeling inadequate where he stood, at the centre of the doctor's attention.

“I-I don't know what to do,” he admitted, feeling his stomach churn with embarrassment at the admission. It was not surprising that he could disappoint in this regard as he surely had in

every other.

Dr Lecter let the tip of his thumb rub gently across the rosy nub of the boy's nipple, “you needn't do anything, if it's easier.”

Will made a small noise at the back of his throat and leant in towards the man. He couldn't find it in him to reply when his doctor was touching him that way. He felt his cock twitch and tried to cross his legs to cover his shame.

“I can lead you through it, if you wish,” The Doctor offered, sliding a firm hand between the boy's clenched thighs to pry them slowly open again.

Will moaned, the proximity to his untouched cock was the most pleasant form of torture. He nodded quickly and let the Doctor take his hand to lead him to the other side of the desk.

“Over the desk”

The boy took one deep, shuddering breath and did as asked, pressing his bare chest against the cool surface, head to one side as he tried and failed to see Hannibal over his shoulder.

A warm hand pressed firmly against the back of his neck then, and Will jolted in surprise.

“Relax Will,” Hannibal's voice was thick with lust as he released his grip to trail his knuckles down Will's spine.

Shivering beneath the gentle caress, Will closed his eyes only to open them a moment later, entirely indecisive, as the hand at the base of his spine turned to palm the soft mounds of his ass. He whimpered as a firm finger slipped between his cheeks to circle the delicate puckered skin there. Hannibal shushed him gently, bringing his free hand to cup Will's balls, finding the skin already pulled taut.

“Beautiful,” He murmured, taking a moment to admire the wanton boy spread out so invitingly before him, his hand wandered forward to the stiff cock leaking pre-cum against the mahogany desk edge. He ran a thumb over the tip.

“I feel as though I've waited so long to have you this way.”

Will shuddered at his words and touch both, rolling his hips back into the Doctor's grip and keening when the hand disappeared so that Hannibal could lick his thumb clean. His other hand followed, and Will heard the clink of glass somewhere behind him. He pressed up onto his elbows, suddenly fearful that the Doctor was already finished with him and had gone to retrieve a drink. He was burning without the man's touch now, a bone deep ache for the barest of contact. He let out a small sob of relief when a firm hand pressed against the small of his back, pinning him into his previous position, arms stretched out above his head.

He felt the textured leather of Hannibal's shoes as his own bare feet were nudged aside to make room for the man between his legs, and then the finger returned, wet now, to circling his hole. “Relax.”

But Will did the exact opposite, tensing as the finger pressed into him, gasping in shock. Hannibal stayed that way, free hand still holding him in place, and allowed Will to adjust to the sensation of being penetrated before withdrawing to the first knuckle and pressing in a second time. He fucked him that way, Will squirming, toes curling, as he tried to decide whether he wanted to pull away or press down deeper. A second finger joined then, tugging the skin of Will's hole tight and drawing another sharp gasp from him.

“My beautiful, brave boy,” Hannibal murmured, leaning forward to lick a stripe along the side of Will's neck and feel him tremble.

He stretched him that way, relishing the little noises he could pull from his boy and then he withdrew his fingers and unbuttoned his trousers to release his own aching cock so that he could lubricate the length of it.

“Shall I?” He asked, lining it up.

~

Will felt the head press between his cheeks and just the thought of the being so entwined with the Doctor made him tilt his hips invitingly.

“Please,” He moaned, turning his head to press his other cheek to the desk's surface.

The Doctor pushed in then, so gently that Will could have cried. It still hurt, but Will was no stranger to pain, and this ache was different, entangled with deep spasms of pleasure. They moaned in tandem once the doctor was fully sheathed, and again when Dr Lecter withdrew to push in more quickly the second time. Will's cock pressed against the solid edge of the desk with each thrust and he basked in the array of sensations, especially pleased with the grunts of pleasure his body was eliciting from the doctor above him.

He felt wanted, cherished and claimed.

With each thrust his body was rocked up along the width of the desk, files placed aside as if for this very purpose.

He felt one hand leave its grip on his hip to entwine with his own and curled his fingers tightly to keep it there.

When the doctor's movements sped from slow thrusts to a more brutal pounding, Will made a small choked noise, overwhelmed. A large, warm hand gripped his cock and he arched back against the older man and moaned as his release painted the mahogany desk, the doctor follow shortly after with a series of near-feral noises, before stilling and resting heavy against the boy's back.

“Perfect,” Hannibal murmured into the boy's ear, heavy and heady and utterly pleased. He smiled when he felt his boy shudder and sniff beneath him, and reluctantly peeled himself away to observe his own release warm and tacky between the boy's cheeks.

“Come,” He whispered, lifting Will easily into his arms so that he could round the desk and position him on his lap, legs straddling his waist.

He extracted the handkerchief from his jacket pocket and cleaned the boy as best he could, paying no mind to the mess he was dripping onto his trousers, he had always kept spare suits in his office.

“Was it good?” Will asked, words slightly slurred now that he was sated.

“Better than I could have ever imagined,” Hannibal assured him, guiding the boy's head to rest in the crook of his neck and feeling the satisfied sigh breathed against the skin there.

Hannibal worked on mentally composing himself as the boy's breathing slowed and he slipped into sleep, his small, naked body going lax in his arms.

His boy was a treasure.

I made a website so I can pretend that I'm a real writer.

Chapter End Notes

Let's have bizarre celebrations
Let's forget who forget what forget where
We'll have bizarre celebrations
I'll play the Satyr in Cypris you the bride being stripped bare

~Of Montreal

Sink the Seine

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was barely dawn, the sky was striped with ripples of peach clouds and the shadows cast by the bare branches of trees were like long slender fingers reaching towards the train tracks, to drag Hannibal back. He wondered briefly if he should let them, step off at the next stop and hail a taxi back to Baltimore, but his presence was required elsewhere.

Hannibal had left his boy without an explanation, and as he sat on the plush seat of his private carriage, he felt for the first time in years, a tiny tendril of guilt worming it's way into his chest.

He adjusted the lapels of his suit jacket for the third time since boarding, despite the perfectly straight lines of his notched collar. He was dressed in black and muted greys, suitably for mourning.

He had tried to read, in an attempt not to think of sad blue eyes and trembling lips, but the eery, intermittent cry of the rolling metal structure was grinding on him and so he was afforded no such distraction. The glass window rattled beside him as he tossed the book aside, disgruntled and completely unaware of how to deal with the feeling.

It had been late when he'd received the fax, from the Lecter house in Burlington. His uncle had passed in the early hours of the evening, from the cerebrovascular disease he had been ailing with for quite some time, and the funeral service was to be held the following day. Hannibal owed Robert Lecter a great deal, and so no time was wasted in packing a few necessities and boarding the first steam train the very next morning. He felt he owed his aunt, Lady Murasaki, even more so, and would not entertain the idea of allowing her to grieve alone.

Still, his first thoughts were of Will.

His precious, and utterly irresistible boy who was now locked away in a building that Hannibal no longer had complete control over.

His patients had never taken precedence over his remaining family before, but now he found himself regretting his hasty departure, and wishing he could have spared a few words to the boy he had grown so attached to.

It occurred to him that he would miss the boy's presence between his legs, his own inadmissible secret. He would miss tugging at brown curls and mouthing at the boy's slender neck. But what he would miss most dreadfully was the boy's mind, the reluctant use of his gift, the nervous admissions he could draw from him if he persisted.

He would return to him after a few short days, but his absence would be sorely felt until then.

To make matters far worse, with such short notice, Bayview Asylum had had to be turned over to the only other doctor available; none other than the intolerable Dr Chilton. Just the thought of the atrocious, little man worming his way through Hannibal's files and picking at his more favoured patients made him grind his teeth. He couldn't bare the thought of Chilton making any decisions regarding his boy.

Hannibal brought his thumb and forefinger to the bridge of his nose to pinch at the growing pressure there and decided to call Bayview the second he arrived at his aunt's house.

~

Will was startled awake, confused to see two familiar powder blue pills thrust his way.

He pushed himself up to sitting, back pressed against the bare brick wall and eyed Orderly Brown suspiciously.

“What are those?” He asked, voice still rough from crying out in the night.

“Your pills,” the orderly sighed, and then noticing Will about to shake his head in denial, stepped closer, gripping his wrist cruelly, and tipped the tablets into his hand, “don't make this harder than it has to be. Take them.” Will glared down at them, swallowing the lump in his throat, but didn't move to do as he was told.

“*Graham*,” the orderly warned, hand shifting to rest on the butt of his baton.

“D-doctor Lecter took me off of these,” Will insisted, stretching his hand back at the orderly in an attempt to deposit them back into the plastic cup from whence they had come.

“Doctor Lecter has left Doctor Chilton in charge, not that I'm obligated to explain this to a patient, so take them.

Now.”

Will shook his head and dropped the pills to land on his flat, grey pillow, refusing to believe he had been placed in this inescapable situation a second time. He looked towards the door, half expecting his doctor to appear before the reality of the orderly's words set in, he had no reason to lie after all.

“Have it your way,” Brown shrugged, walking to the open door of Will's cell to call for assistance.

Another orderly shouldered his way into the room, and Will realised with dismay, that it was the man he had accidentally knocked to the floor on his second day at the Asylum. He shrunk in on himself, raising his hands in a vain effort to appease the two men approaching him, heart thrumming in panic.

“Grab the pills, I'll hold him down,” Brown reached to pin Will's right arm to the wall behind him giving him a second to bat the pills from his pillow with his left, before the second orderly could reach for them.

“You little shit,” he spat, back handing him across the face.

Will's head span, the tendons in his neck shocked taut and close to snapping, and blood sprayed from between his split lips to dot the grey brick red. Before he could draw a breath he was pinned to the wall and the larger orderly had returned with the dreaded pills, pinching his nose and squeezing the sides of his jaw painfully tight. The harsh contact with the wall had knocked the air from his lungs, and so he barley managed to hold out for five seconds before he was parting his lips to choke back a breath, and the pills with being shoved mercilessly into his mouth. He gagged around the two thick fingers as they were forced to the back of his throat, eyes watering.

The pills dragged dryly down the back of his throat when he swallowed on reflex and he felt a new sense of panic set in, remembering his reaction the last time he had been dosed up on them.

He was hit once again, for good measure, and then left gasping for breath with the pills sitting heavy in his gut.

He drew his knees up to his stomach and let himself sob then. He had been such a fool to believe the doctor cared for him, so doltish to think so highly of himself. Dr Lecter had left without so much as a mention of his departure, and in doing so had proven just how insignificant Will was. He was just a stupid, broken boy and he had offered up every part of himself, and been found wanting.

~

“There's a call for you, Doctor Chilton.”

Frederick's lips spread into a thin smile, it was not hard to guess who was calling or why. “Thank you Nurse Selmon.”

He left his office with a spring in his step, to retrieve the call in the lower office, where the sole telephone was kept.

“Yes?” he asked, his smugness ringing clear through the receiver.

“Good morning Doctor Chilton, I'm calling to lay out the instructions in regards to my patients.”

Frederick frowned. A death in the family, the asylum out of his control, and Dr Lecter didn't even have the decency to sound mildly flustered.

“I can assure you I have everything under control,” He replied, though he noticed his own tone was clipped.

“Even so, several patients require specified doses of their medication. Miller and Harris need a double dose and Graham should remain unmedicated.”

Frederick felt his heart skip a beat, “Graham has allergies?” He asked, knowing a death in the short time that the asylum was in his hands would not go unrecognised.

He had told the staff to administer sedatives to every patient, seeing no reason that he shouldn't make his time on top as manageable as possible.

“Yes, extreme allergies,” Lecter replied after a moment.

“Right, well, that's noted, thank you for your call.”

Frederick slammed the phone down with the briefest valediction possible and hurried from the office, slowing from a run to a fast paced walk when he passed members of staff. It was only when he reached the stretching hall of patient rooms that he realised he hadn't the smallest clue which one belonged to Will Graham.

He had called off the use of the showers that morning, citing broken plumbing in a lackadaisical attempt to avoid Jerry Miller's daily outburst, and breakfast had been delayed by an hour, so the patients were pacing behind their closed doors.

It was only when he heard muted retching a few rooms away that he was able to locate Graham. He flung the door open, expecting to find the patient sprawled on the floor in his own bile, but instead found him doubled over in the corner, two fingers thrust to the back of his own throat.

“That-a-boy,” He murmured, quickly sliding the door shut behind him to conceal his mistake.

Graham tensed when he spotted him, frozen with his fingers still wedged harshly against his gag reflex, and eyes wide.

“Go on,” Frederick urged, glancing at the closed door and then back at the boy, “get it all out.”

Graham's watering eyes narrowed but he continued to gag around his fingers until he expelled the tablets from his system. Frederick closed in behind him to glance over his shoulder with a grimace.

“There we go, no harm done,” he said, eyeing the patient cautiously.

His cheeks were streaked with tears from his effort to rid the pills from himself but there was no evidence of an allergic reaction. Frederick chose to ignore the split lip and the blooming shadow of a bruise beneath his left eye. He was about to threaten the patient into silence when the door opened behind him and Nurse Bloom entered, shocked to stillness to see the temporary head doctor standing over a beaten and sick patient.

“Ah, Miss Bloom,” Frederick greeted her, “Graham is feeling unwell today, please ensure he is kept to his room.” The nurse nodded, and with a soft glance to the patient still on the floor, turned to leave.

~

Will felt reality shift around him. Clearly he had not been able to empty his system of the entire dose of sedatives, and the walls were moving in the corner of his eye. When he snapped his throbbing head around to look at them, they stilled, only to continue their tormenting again when he let his eyes rest on the floor.

Nothing that had occurred that morning seemed to make any sense to him, and he found himself questioning whether or not he was conscious at all. It would be easier to pretend this was one of his nightmares, that the doctor had not really left him behind, but he knew with a sickening certainty that he had, that he was always going to in the end.

Nurse Bloom returned to clean the mess from the floor and leave a plastic cup of water and plate of dry bread on the seat of the rocking chair. She spared another sad look to him, and seemed to contemplate whether to speak or not.

After a moment she sighed and left, locking the door behind her.

Will cried again, he drank the water to rid his mouth of it's awful taste, and ignored the bread entirely.

The one small mercy that had come from Dr Chilton's bizarre behaviour, was that Will would not have to endure the dayroom. Still, the fact that he had lost the familiarity of his doctor's lofty office, and the unexpected warmth from the man himself, hurt like a taloned hand cracking his ribs apart and tearing his heart from his chest.

~

Abel Gideon sat bored and picking at his nails in the darkness of cell, when he heard footsteps approaching. He stood from the foot of his bed with a sinister smile, that quickly faded to a frown when Chilton came to stand before him.

He could respect Dr Lecter at least, a cunning monster in a person suit who belonged on the same side of the bars as he, but Chilton possessed none of Lecter's perplexing charm or barely restrained impetuosity. “Oh,” he sighed, “pity it's you, I was expecting the other doctor and his pretty boy.” Chilton did a poor job of hiding his confusion.

“*What* boy?” The doctor demanded, hilariously perturbed.

“Oh *yes*,” Abel teased, spinning on his heel to walk the short width of his cell, “I hardly ever see the good doctor without him.”

“If you think you can play games with me you are sorely mistaken,” Chilton puffed out his chest as if to force some gusto behind his words, “I am the Head Doctor of this institution and-”

“Perjurer!” Abel cut in, loud enough to echo through the halls and send Chilton stumbling back a step or two. His outcry caused a bevy of hollering curses from the surrounding cells in

reply. Abel's lips twisted into a satisfied smirk, a wicked twinkle in his eye. “I have it on good authority that you're nothing more than a stopgap.”

Chilton's eyes narrowed, it was painfully clear when he was scheming and Abel had to resist the urge to yawn.

This doctor was a plaything, hardly the challenge as he had grown accustomed to.

“Is the boy, by any chance, William Graham?” Chilton asked eventually, and Abel felt something akin to disappointment that Dr Lecter had allowed his little game to be so easily regarded by others.

“If I could confirm your hunch,” Abel purred, holding his hands behind his back in an easy show of confidence that Chilton tried, and failed, to mimic, “what would you do with the information?”

“I would certainly wish to discover what made the made the boy so interesting.”

Abel could have laughed at the man's cluelessness, left him dangling there unsure and second guessing, but it was going to be far more thrilling to see Dr Lecter's reaction to having his favourite possession tampered with. He wrapped his fingers slowly around the cool metal bars and pressed his face up against them. “I believe he prefers Will.”

Links to early access and exclusive content can be found here.

A HUGE thank you to Cas.Blast and MaddyContrary for your support :)

Chapter End Notes

You're no different from the prints that crease the wires
Or mosquitoes that now operate on her brain
Thought that if I sank the Seine I might find you
I might find you
~Of Montreal

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